

REMARKS

The Office Action dated October 6, 2004 has been received and carefully considered. Claims 1, 5, 10, 13, 17-20, 23, 34, 35, 66 and 83-88 have been amended and claims 14-16, 32, 36 and 80-82 have been canceled. Reconsideration of the outstanding objections and rejections in the present application therefore is respectfully requested based on the following remarks.

Allowability of Claims 13, 16, 17, 19, 22, 32, 39-41, 43, 44-65, 79, 82, 83, 85 and 88

The Applicant notes with appreciation the indication at page 5 of the Office Action that claims 44-65 are allowable and that claims 13, 16, 17, 19, 22, 32, 39-41, 43, 79, 82, 83, 85 and 88 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims. The Applicants have amended the independent claims consistent with the Examiner's remarks.

Enablement Rejection of Claims 15, 36 and 81

At page 2 of the Office Action, claims 15, 36 and 81 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. Although the Applicant submits that these claims are sufficiently enabled at, *inter alia*, page 11, line 27 to page 12, line 15 of the specification, due to financial considerations and in an effort to advance the prosecution of the present application, claims 15, 36 and 81 have been canceled, thereby obviating this rejection. Withdrawal of this rejection therefore is respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claims 1-12, 14, 18, 20, 21, 23-31, 33-35, 37, 38, 42, 66-77, 80, 84, 86 and 87

At page 3 of the Office Action, claims 1-10, 14, 18, 20, 21, 23-29, 33-35, 37, 38, 42, 66-76, 80, 84, 86 and 87 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 102(a) as being anticipated by Hirota (JP 2001008161A). At page 4 of the Office Action, claims 11, 12, 30, 31 and 77 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hirota. The claims have been amended, thereby obviating these rejections.

Due to financial considerations and in the interest of advancing the prosecution of the present application, the independent claims have been amended to include allowable subject matter. Specifically, claim 1, from which claims 2-13 and 17-22 depend, has been amended to substantially recite the limitations of allowable dependent claim 16 and the intervening

dependent claim 14 (now canceled). Claim 66, from which claims 67-79 and 83-88 depend, has been similarly amended. Claim 23, from which claims 24-31 and 33-43 depend, has been amended to substantially recite the limitations of allowable dependent claim 32 (now canceled). Accordingly, claims 1, 23 and 66 should be allowable, as should claims 2-13, 17-22, 24-31, 33-43, 67-70 and 83-88 at least by virtue of their dependence from one of claims 1, 23 or 66. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the anticipation and obviousness rejections are improper at this time and withdrawal of these rejections therefore is respectfully requested.

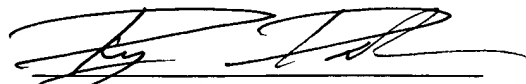
Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, the Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is in condition for allowance, and an early indication of the same is courteously solicited. The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone at the below listed telephone number in order to expedite resolution of any issues and to expedite passage of the present application to issue, if any comments, questions, or suggestions arise in connection with the present application.

The Applicant does not believe that any additional fees are due, but if the Commissioner believes additional fees are due, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account Number 50-0441.

Respectfully submitted,

3 January 2005
Date



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